

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

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INFO USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON ENG PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MILI GR US

SUBJECT: GREEK PRESS REACTION TO MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ANNOUNCEMENT
OF US AMPHIBIOUS EXERCISE IN GREECE - PHIBLEX 3A

REF: ATHENS 6781(NOTAL)

1. MINISTRY OF DEFENSE ISSUED A STATEMENT ON SEPTEMBER 8
REGARDING THE U.S. AMPHIBIOUS LANDING EXERCISE IN GREECE -
PHIBLEX 3A(REFTEL). THE TEXT FOLLOWS: "DURING THE PERIOD
10-15 SEPTEMBER 1975 A SMALL SCALE LANDING EXERCISE WILL
BE CONDUCTED IN THE GYTHION AREA BY AN AMERICAN UNIT OF
MARINE BATTALION STRENGTH SUPPORTED WITH THE APPROPRIATE
MEANS. A NUMBER OF HELLENIC OFFICERS FROM THE THREE
BRANCHES OF THE ARMED FORCES WILL ATTEND THE EXERCISE
AS OBSERVERS IN ORDER TO BE BRIEFED ON THE TACTICAL AND
TECHNICAL EMPLOYMENT OF MODERN EQUIPMENT WITH WHICH
GREECE HAS ALSO BEEN EQUIPPED RECENTLY. IT IS
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CLARIFIED THAT THIS EXERCISE IS NOT RELATED WHATSOEVER

WITH THE EXERCISES CONDUCTED BY NATO AND (IT) SERVES
THE NATIONAL INTERESTS FROM MANY ASPECTS."

2. TELEVISION AND RADIO LAST NIGHT AND MOST ATHENS
MORNING NEWSPAPERS ON SEPTEMBER 9 REFERRED TO THE
DEFENSE MINISTRY STATEMENT AND REPORTED IT IN FAIRLY
STRAIGHTFORWARD MANNER (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE
COMMUNIST PRESS - SEE BELOW). HOWEVER, TO VIMA
(LIBERAL, OPPOSITION) SUGGESTED ITS SURPRISE OVER
THIS DEVELOPMENT BY PLACING AN EXCLAMATION POINT
AFTER ITS ONE COLUMN FRONT PAGE HEADLINE - "LANDING
EXERCISES OF SIXTH FLEET MARINES IN GYTHION*"

3. THE TWO COMMUNIST ATHENS DAILIES GAVE A
DEFINITELY NEGATIVE CAST TO THE STORY. AVGHI
(COMMUNIST PARTY-INTERIOR) PRESENTED THE ITEM AS
ITS LEAD FRONT PAGE STORY WITH THE HEADLINE "WHILE
WASHINGTON PRESSURES ARE INTENSIFIED FOR A BIZONAL
SOLUTION, LANDING EXERCISES OF AMERICANS IN GYTHION:
A PROVOCATION TO POPULAR SENTIMENT". ITS STORY NOTES
THAT DESPITE ASSURANCES OF THE DEFENSE MINISTRY THAT THE
EXERCISE HAS NOT CONNECTION WITH NATO, "" MILITARY OBSERVERS
POINT OUT THE CLOSE CONNECTION IN TIME BETWEEN IT AND THE
NATO DEEP EXPRESS EXERCISE (SEPTEMBER 12-18) WHICH WILL
TAKE PLACE IN EASTERN THRACE AND IN THE AEGEAN".

4. SIMILARLY, RIZOSPASTIS (COMMUNIST PARTY-EXTERIOR)
LED INTO ITS PAGE SEVEN STORY WITH THE HEADLINE "PROVO-
CATIVE LANDING EXERCISE OF AMERICAN MARINES IN GYTHION".
IT TOO ATTEMPTS TO CONNECT THE EXERCISE WITH NATO BY
ASSERTING THAT CIRCLES OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY HERE
MAINTAIN THAT THE EXERCISE IS A CONTRADICTION
OF THE GOVERNMENT PROCLAMATION THAT GREECE HAD
DISENGAGED ITSELF FROM THE "NETS" OF BOTH NATO AND THE
USA. RATHER, RIZOSPASTIS CONCLUDED, IT CONSTITUTES AN
INDICATION THAT GREECE CONTINUES TO REMAIN UNDER THE
FULL CONTROL OF U.S. IMPERIALISM AND OF NATO.
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